

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 2, 2001

The Honorable Wayne Gilchrest  
The Honorable John Olver  
The House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Messrs. Gilchrest and Olver:

The President has asked me to respond to your letter of November 13, 2000, regarding the Sixth Conference of the Parties (COP6) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The President is genuinely grateful for your continued interest and support on the critical issue of global climate change.

Unfortunately, as you are aware, the COP6 negotiations in The Hague ended without resolution of major issues, and additional discussions held since then with some of our "umbrella group" negotiating partners (Japan, Canada, Australia), and representatives from the European Union yielded no agreement. The President concurs with your assessment that the negotiations in The Hague were an opportunity to craft the necessary rules to make the Kyoto Protocol operable, and to clarify the framework of the flexibility mechanisms, thereby ensuring an international protocol with environmental integrity and maximum cost-effectiveness. However, we knew going into the negotiations that many complex technical issues remained, and that resolution of all the outstanding issues would be difficult.

While we are disappointed by this outcome, we remain optimistic that concurrence of all countries on a global solution to this global problem is still possible. We feel strongly, as do you, that the United States must show leadership and be a key player in achieving the right long term solution. We hope and expect that the next Administration will pursue this issue with equal vigor and commitment in order to reach agreement on a fair and effective treaty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Roger S. Ballentine", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Roger S. Ballentine

Chairman, White House Climate Change Task  
Force, and Deputy Assistant to the President